Is Collaborative Planning Realistic with Multiple Jurisdictions? – A Local Sponsor's Experience

Harris County
Flood Control District

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Planning Community of Practice
Conference – San Francisco, CA
May 10, 2006

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Chief Engineer

Questions Addressed

- Who are we?
- Why is collaboration important?
- Why is collaboration difficult?
- Can collaboration work? How?
- What is the Corps' role?

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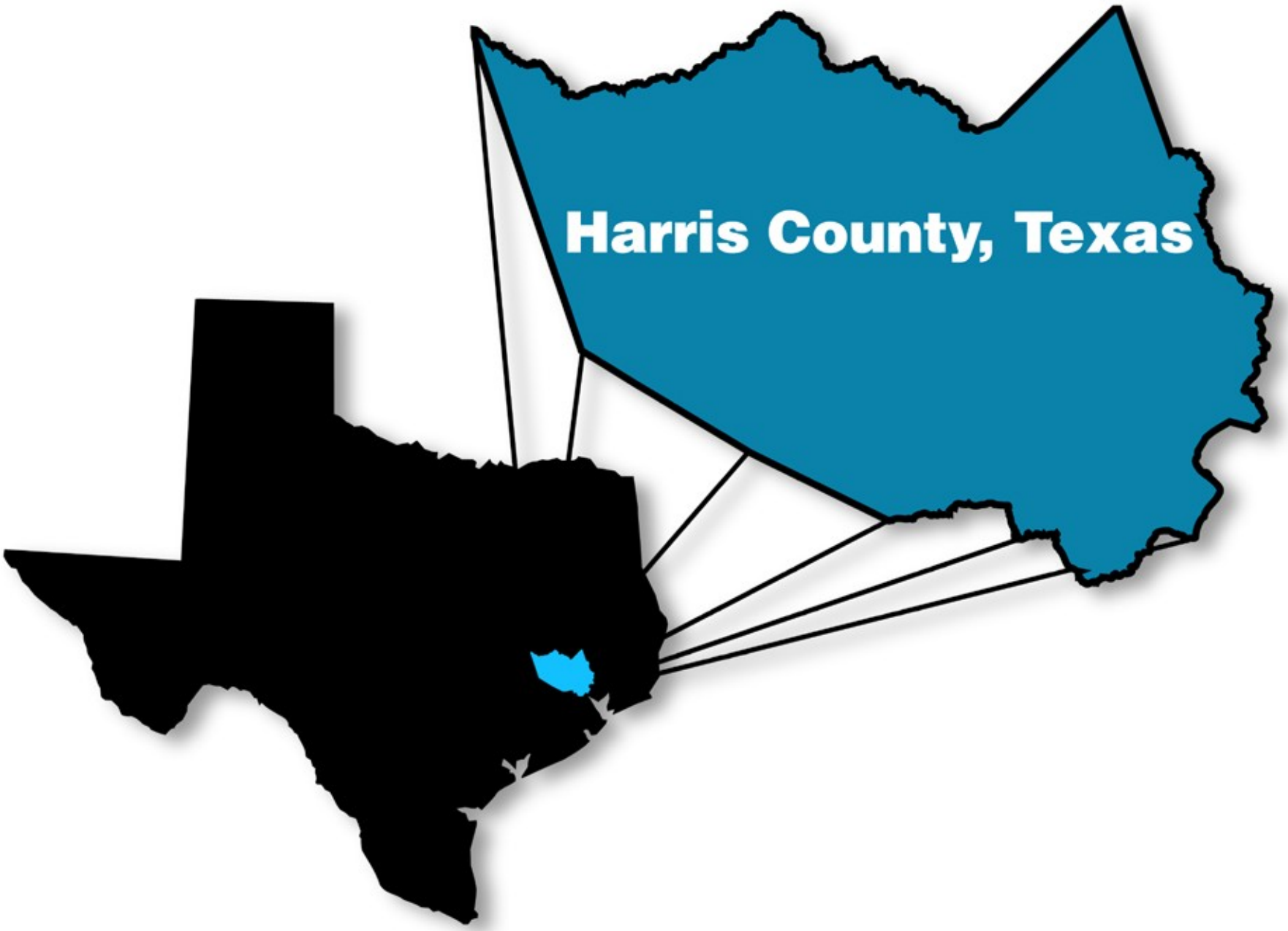
Harris County, Texas

The Partnership – Since 1937

US Army
Corps
of Engineers

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Flood Damage Reduction Projects

- *6 completed*
- *3 under construction*
- *7 in planning*

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Plan Formulation Experience

Currently, HCFCD involved in the plan formulation of:

- **Two Corps lead projects,**
- **Three Sponsor lead projects, and**
- **Two other Sponsor lead projects just starting.**

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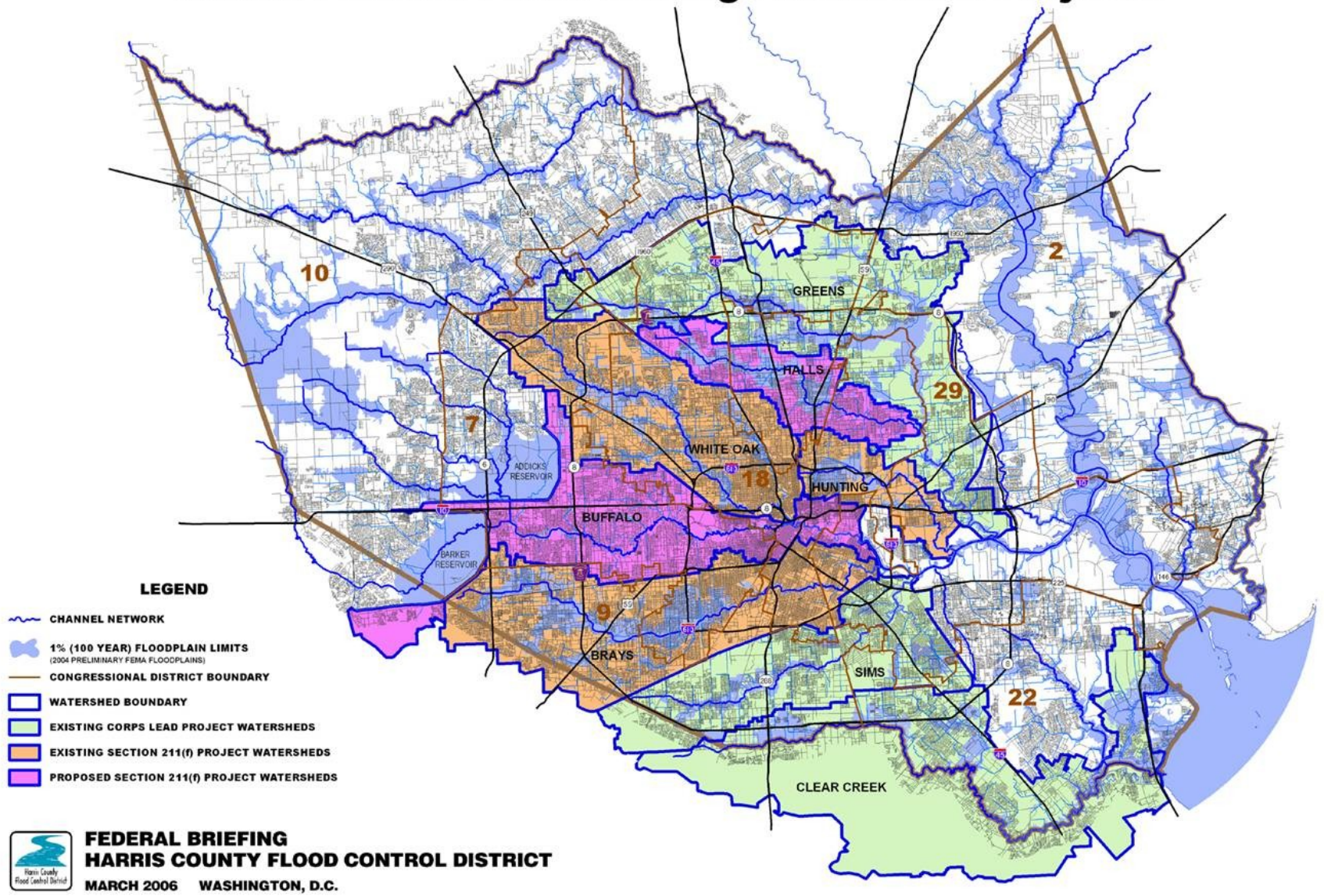
Active Federal Flood Damage Reduction Projects



LEGEND

- CHANNEL NETWORK
- 1% (100 YEAR) FLOODPLAIN LIMITS (2004 PRELIMINARY FEMA FLOODPLAINS)
- CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- WATERSHED BOUNDARY
- EXISTING CORPS LEAD PROJECT WATERSHEDS
- EXISTING SECTION 211(f) PROJECT WATERSHEDS
- PROPOSED SECTION 211(f) PROJECT WATERSHEDS

FEDERAL BRIEFING
HARRIS COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT
MARCH 2006 WASHINGTON, D.C.

Active Federal Flood Damage Reduction Projects_11x17.mxd

WRDA 1996 – Section 211(f)

"Construction of Flood Control Projects by Non-Federal Interests"

- Allows local sponsor to take the lead in planning, design, and construction.
- Corps monitors and approves work.
- Cost sharing the same.
- Corps rules and process followed.

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Corps Plan Formulation – Things to Like

- A focused process to identify a solution to a problem.
- Process is systematic.
- Analytical requirements are technically sound.
- Reports document the process and justify the selected plan.

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Corps Plan Formulation – Things Not to Like

- Studies can take a long time.
- Cost is high
- Tedious – Team members and local sponsors get frustrated.
  - Bog down in too much detail
  - Process changes
  - Reviews long & add work at end
  - Communication

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Jurisdiction Extremes

Besides the Corps and HCFCD, the number of local jurisdictions involved.

- **Greens Bayou - 1**
- **Brays Bayou - 2**
- **White Oak Bayou - 3**
- **Clear Creek – 26 (3 Local Sponsors)**

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Why is Collaboration Important?

- Better solutions at a larger geographic scale
- Address multiple functions and benefits
- More effective use of funding
- Looks good to the public & elected officials like it

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Why is Collaboration Difficult?

- Long planning process
- Priorities & objectives different
- Schedules & deadlines different
- More entities, more problems
- Funding usually not synchronized
- Local sponsor's jurisdiction
- Corps' limitations

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Can Collaboration Work? How?

Yes, it can, to a point.

- **Local Sponsor take the lead**
- **Close relationship between Corps and Local Sponsor**
- **Effective communication**
- **Have realistic expectations**
- **Have patience**

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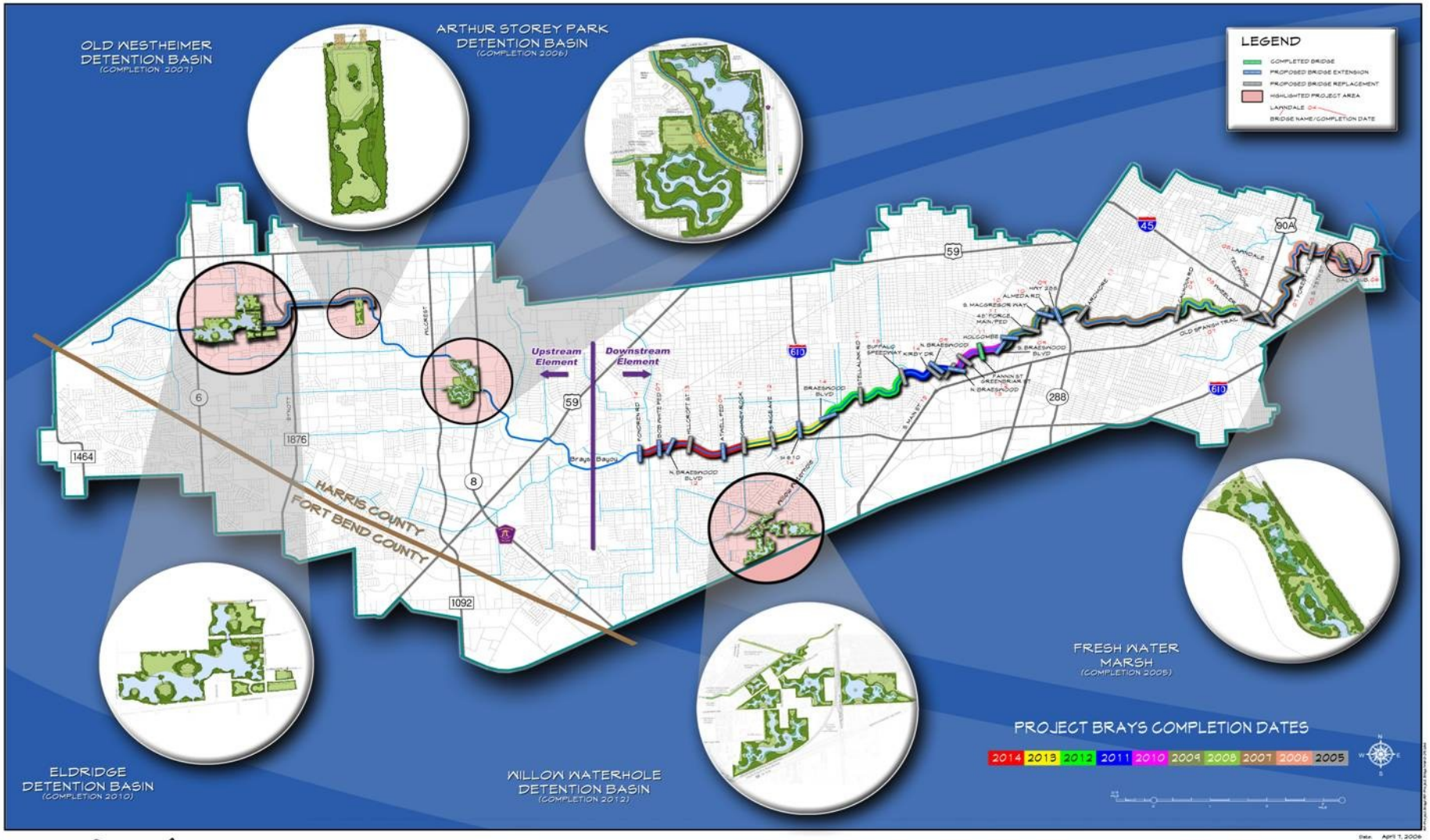
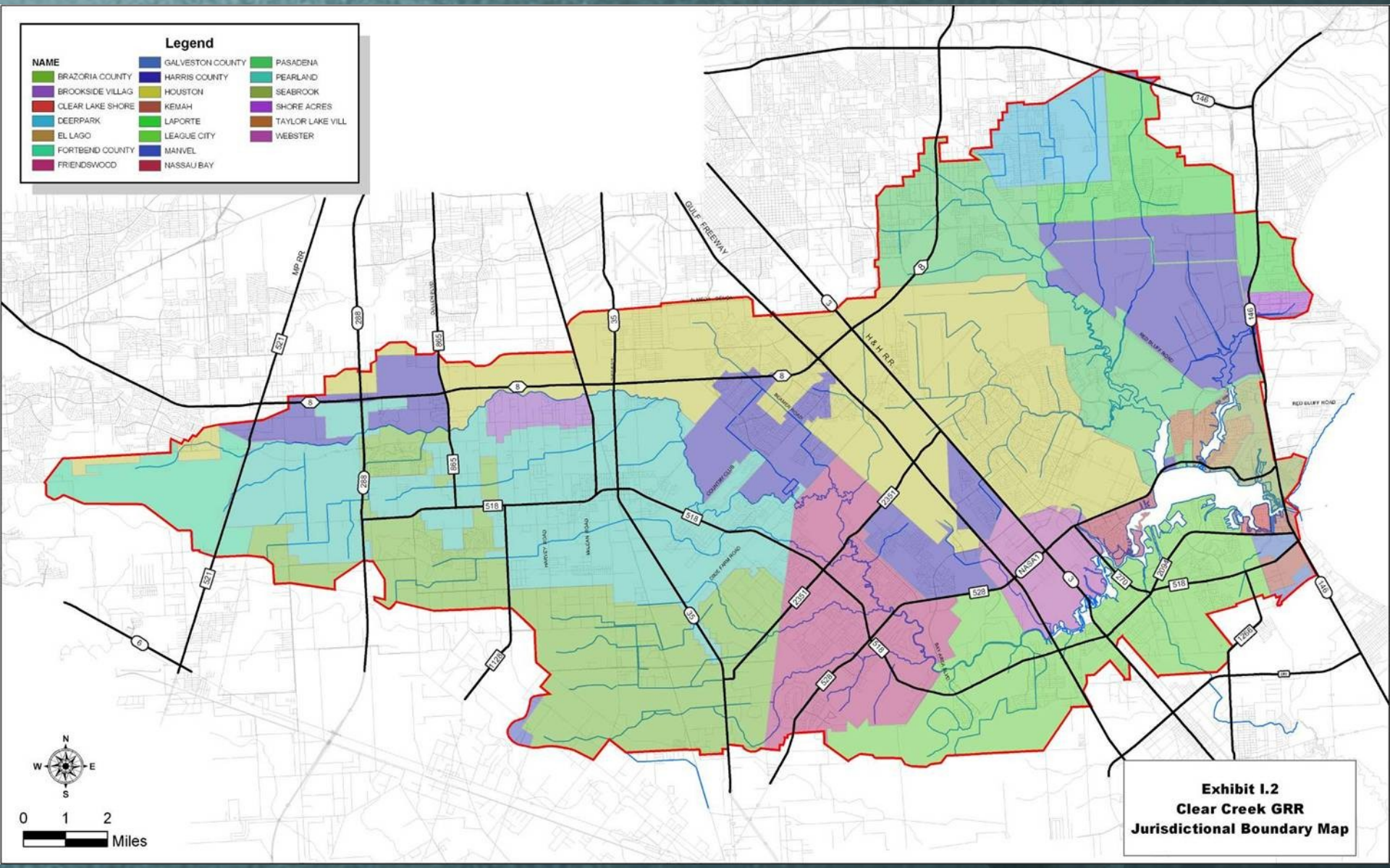
Brays Bayou Project Locations



Brays Bayou Experience

- Conducted frequent coordination with environmental agencies, Harris County, and City of Houston
- Established Citizens Advisory Committee
- Identified & updated specific objectives through planning &


Legend
NAME
BRAZORIA COUNTY
BROOKSIDE VILLAG
CLEAR LAKE SHORE
DEERPARK
EL LAGO
FORTBEND COUNTY
FRIENDSWOOD
GALVESTON COUNTY
HARRIS COUNTY
HOUSTON
KEMAH
LAPORTE
LEAGUE CITY
MANVEL
NASSAU BAY
PASADENA
PEARLAND
SEABROOK
SHORE ACRES
TAYLOR LAKE VILL
WEBSTER
GULF FREEWAY
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MP RR
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Exhibit I.2
Clear Creek GRR
Jurisdictional Boundary Map

Clear Creek Experience

- Established Clear Creek Steering Committee in 1989
- Established Citizens Advisory Committee in 1997
- Conducting frequent coordination with environmental agencies
- Identifying & updating specific objectives

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What is the Corps' Role?

Under current rules, regulations, and procedures, Corps should continue with what the Corps does best –

1. **Expertise in planning & technical areas**
2. **Bring money**

Changing Corps planning process not realistic at this time

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It Takes Collaboration at This Level, Too

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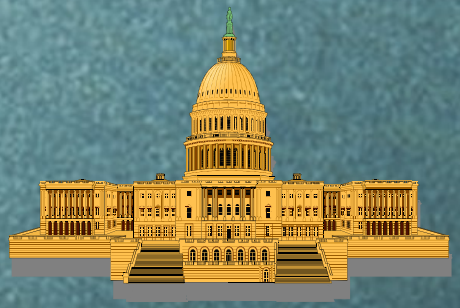

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